

NEW
SERIES

NOVEMBER

VOL.
19

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YEAR TO YEAR"

All the Year Round

A
Weekly Journal

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CHARLES DICKENS

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"HOUSEHOLD WORDS"

PART 108

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1877.

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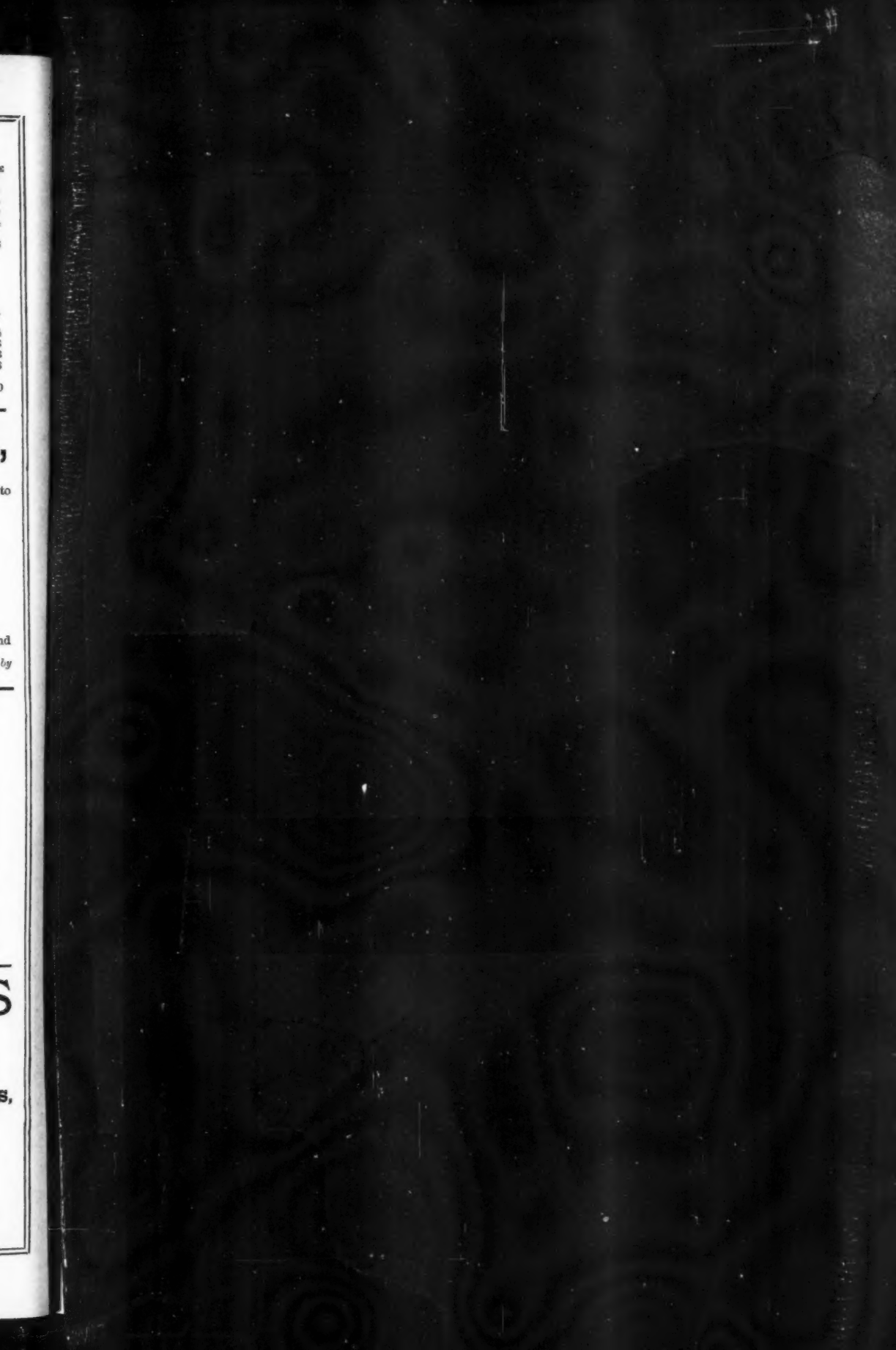
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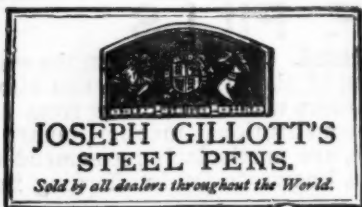
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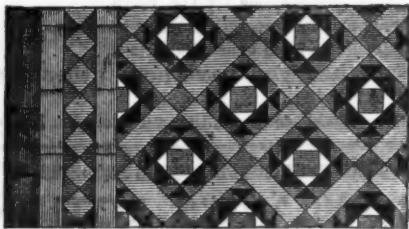
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No. 466. NEW SERIES. SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 3, 1877. PRICE TWOPENCE.

IS HE POPENJOY?

BY ANTHONY TROLLOPE.

CHAPTER V. MISS TALLOWAX IS SHOWN THE HOUSE.

THE dean took his aunt over to Manor Cross in his brougham. The dean's brougham was the neatest carriage in Brotherton, very much more so than the bishop's family carriage. It was, no doubt, generally to be seen with only one horse; and neither the bishop nor Mrs. Barton ever stirred without two; but then one horse is enough for town work, and that one horse could lift his legs and make himself conspicuous, in a manner of which the bishop's rather sorry jades knew nothing. On this occasion, as the journey was long, there were two horses—hired; but, nevertheless, the brougham looked very well as it came up the long Manor Cross avenue. Miss Tallowax became rather frightened, as she drew near to the scene of her coming grandeur.

"Henry," she said to her nephew, "they will think so little of me."

"My dear aunt," replied the dean, "in these days a lady who has plenty of money of her own can hold her head up anywhere. The dear old marchioness will think quite as much of you as you do of her."

What perhaps struck Miss Tallowax most, at the first moment, was the plainness of the ladies' dresses. She herself was rather gorgeous, in a shot-silk gown, and a fashionable bonnet crowded with flowers. She had been ashamed of the splendour of the article as she put it on,

and yet had been ashamed also of her ordinary daily head-gear. But when she saw the marchioness, and especially when she saw Lady Sarah, who was altogether strange to her, she wished that she had come in her customary black gown. She had heard something about Lady Sarah from her niece, and had conceived an idea that Lady Sarah was the dragon of the family. But when she saw a little woman, looking almost as old as herself—though in truth the one might have been the other's mother—dressed in an old brown merino, with the slightest morsel of white collar to be seen round her neck, she began to hope that the dragon would not be very fierce.

"I hope you like Brotherton, Miss Tallowax," said Lady Sarah. "I think I have heard that you were here once before."

"I like Brotherton very much, my lady," Lady Sarah smiled as graciously as she knew how. "I came when they first made Henry dean, a long time ago now it seems. But he had not then the honour of knowing your mamma or the family."

"It wasn't long before we did know him," said the marchioness. Then Miss Tallowax turned round and again curtsied with her head and shoulders.

The dean at this moment was not in the room, having been withdrawn from the ladies by his son-in-law at the front door; but as luncheon was announced, the two men came in. Lord George gave his arm to his wife's great aunt, and the dean followed with the marchioness.

"I really am almost ashamed to walk out before her ladyship," said Miss Tallowax, with a slight attempt at laughing at her own ignorance.

But Lord George rarely laughed at anything, and certainly did not know how to treat pleasantly such a subject as this. "It's quite customary," he said very gravely.

The lunch was much more tremendous to Miss Tallowax than had been the dinner at the Deanery. Though she was ignorant—ignorant at any rate of the ways of such people as those with whom she was now consorting—she was by no means a stupid old woman. She was soon able to perceive that, in spite of the old merino gown, it was Lady Sarah's spirit that quelled them all. At first there was very little conversation. Lord George did not speak a word. The marchioness never exerted herself. Poor Mary was cowed and unhappy. The dean made one or two little efforts, but without much success. Lady Sarah was intent upon her mutton-chop, which she finished to the last shred, turning it over and over in her plate so that it should be economically disposed of, looking at it very closely, because she was short-sighted. But when the mutton-chop had finally done its duty, she looked up from her plate and gave evident signs that she intended to take upon herself the weight of the conversation. All the subsequent ceremonies of the lunch itself, the little tarts, and the jelly, and the custard pudding, she despised altogether, regarding them as wicked additions. One pudding after dinner she would have allowed, but nothing more of that sort. It might be all very well for parvenu millionaires to have two grand dinners a day, but it could not be necessary that the Germaines should live in that way, even when the Dean of Brotherton and his aunt came to lunch with them.

"I hope you like this part of the country, Miss Tallowax," she said as soon as she had deposited her knife and fork over the bone.

"Manor Cross is quite splendid, my lady," said Miss Tallowax.

"It is an old house, and we shall have great pleasure in showing you what the people call the state-rooms. We never use them. Of course you know the house belongs to my brother, and we only live here because it suits him to stay in Italy."

"That's the young marquis, my lady?"

"Yes; my elder brother is Marquis of Brotherton, but I cannot say that he is very young. He is two years my senior, and ten years older than George."

"But I think he's not married yet?" asked Miss Tallowax.

The question was felt to be disagreeable by them all. Poor Mary could not keep herself from blushing, as she remembered how much to her might depend on this question of her brother-in-law's marriage. Lord George felt that the old lady was enquiring what chance there might be that her grandniece should ever become a marchioness. Old Lady Brotherton, who had always been anxious that her elder son should marry, felt uncomfortable, as did also the dean, conscious that all there must be aware how important must be the matter to him.

"No," said Lady Sarah, with stately gravity; "my elder brother is not yet married. If you would like to see the rooms, Miss Tallowax, I shall have pleasure in showing you the way."

The dean had seen the rooms before, and remained with the old lady. Lord George, who thought very much of everything affecting his own family, joined the party, and Mary felt herself compelled to follow her husband and her aunt. The two younger sisters also accompanied Lady Sarah.

"This is the room in which Queen Elizabeth slept," said Lady Sarah, entering a large chamber on the ground-floor, in which there was a four-post bedstead, almost as high as the ceiling, and looking as though no human body had profaned it for the last three centuries.

"Dear me," said Miss Tallowax, almost afraid to press such sacred boards with her feet. "Queen Elizabeth! Did she really now?"

"Some people say she never did actually come to Manor Cross at all," said the conscientious Lady Amelia; "but there is no doubt the room was prepared for her."

"Laws!" said Miss Tallowax, who began to be less afraid of distant royalty now that a doubt was cast on its absolute presence.

"Examining the evidence as closely as we can," said Lady Sarah, with a savage glance at her sister, "I am inclined to think that she certainly did come. We know that she was at Brotherton in 1582, and there exists the letter in which Sir Humphrey Germaine, as he was then, is desired to prepare rooms for her. I myself have no doubt on the subject."

"After all it does not make much difference," said Mary.

"I think it makes all the difference in

the world," said Lady Susanna. "That piece of furniture will always be sacred to me, because I believe it did once afford rest and sleep to the gracious majesty of England."

"It do make a difference, certainly," said Miss Tallowax, looking at the bed with all her eyes. "Does anybody ever go to bed here now?"

"Nobody, ever," said Lady Sarah. "Now we will go through to the great dining-hall. That's the portrait of the first earl."

"Painted by Kneller," said Lady Amelia, proudly.

"Oh, indeed," said Miss Tallowax.

"There is some doubt as to that," said Lady Sarah. "I have found out that Sir Godfrey Kneller was only born in 1648, and as the first earl died a year or two after the Restoration, I don't know that he could have done it."

"It was always said that it was painted by Kneller," said Lady Amelia.

"There has been a mistake, I fear," said Lady Sarah.

"Oh, indeed," said Miss Tallowax, looking up with intense admiration at a very ill-drawn old gentleman in armour. Then they entered the state dining-room or hall, and Miss Tallowax was informed that the room had not been used for any purpose whatever for very many years. "And such a beautiful room!" said Miss Tallowax, with much regret.

"The fact is, I believe, that the chimney smokes horribly," said Lord George.

"I never remember a fire here," said Lady Sarah. "In very cold weather we have a portable stove brought in, just to preserve the furniture. This is called the old ball-room."

"Dear me!" ejaculated Miss Tallowax, looking round at the faded yellow hangings.

"We did have a ball here once," said Lady Amelia, "when Brotherton came of age. I can just remember it."

"Has it ever been used since?" asked Mary.

"Never," said Lady Sarah. "Sometimes when it's rainy we walk up and down for exercise. It is a fine old house, but I often wish that it were smaller. I don't think people want rooms of this sort now as much as they used to do. Perhaps a time may come when my brother will make Manor Cross gay again, but it is not very gay now. I think that is all, Miss Tallowax."

"It's very fine—very fine, indeed," said

Miss Tallowax, shivering. Then they all trooped back into the morning-room which they used for their daily life.

The old lady, when she had got back into the brougham with her nephew the dean was able to express her mind freely. "I wouldn't live in that house, Henry, not if they was to give it me for nothing."

"They'd have to give you something to keep it up with."

"And not then either. Of course it's all very well having a bed that Queen Elizabeth slept in."

"Or didn't sleep in."

"I'd teach myself to believe she did. But, dear me, that isn't everything. It nearly gave me the horrors to look at it. Room after room—room after room—and nobody living in any of them."

"People can't live in more than a certain number of rooms at once, aunt."

"Then what's the use of having them? And don't you think, for the daughters of a marchioness, they are a little what you'd call—dowdy?"

"They don't go in for dress much."

"Why, my *Jemima* at home, when the dirty work is done, is twice smarter than Lady Sarah. And, Henry, don't you think they're a little hard upon Mary?"

"Hard upon her; how?" The dean had listened to the old woman's previous criticisms with a smile; but now he was interested and turned sharply round to her. "How, hard?"

"Moping her up there among themselves; and it seemed to me they snubbed her whenever she spoke." The dean had not wanted his aunt's observation to make him feel this. The tone of every syllable addressed to his girl had caught his ear. He had been pleased to marry her into so good a family. He had been delighted to think that, by means of his prosperity in the world, his father's granddaughter might probably become a peeress; but he certainly had not intended that even for such a reward as that his daughter should become submissive to the old maids at Manor Cross. Foreseeing something of this he had stipulated that she should have a house of her own in London; but half her time would probably be spent in the country, and, with reference to that half of her time, it would be necessary that she should be made to understand that, as the wife of Lord George, she was in no respect inferior to his sisters, and that in some respects she was their superior. "I don't see the

good of living in a big house," continued Miss Tallowax, "if all the time everything is to be as dull as dull."

"They are older than she is, you know."

"Poor little dear! I always did say that young folk should have young folk about 'em. Of course it's a great thing for her to have a lord for her husband. But he looks a'most too old himself for such a pretty darling as your Mary."

"He's only thirty-three."

"It's in the looks, I suppose, because he's so grand. But it's that Lady Sarah puzzles me. It isn't in her looks, and yet she has it all her own way. Well; I liked going there, and I'm glad I've been; but I don't know as I shall ever want to go again." Then there was silence for some time; but as the brougham was driven into Brotherton Miss Tallowax spoke again. "I don't suppose an old woman like me can ever be of any use, and you'll always be at hand to look after her. But if ever she should want an outing, just to raise her spirits, old as I am, I think I could make it brighter for her than it is there." The dean took her hand and pressed it, and then there was no more said.

When the brougham was driven away Lord George took his wife for a walk in the park. She was still struggling hard to be in love with him, never owning failure to herself, and sometimes assuring herself that she had succeeded altogether. Now, when he asked her to come with him, she put on her hat joyfully, and joined her hands over his arm as she walked away with him into the shrubbery.

"She's a wonderful old woman; is not she, George?"

"Not very wonderful."

"Of course you think she's vulgar."

"I didn't say so."

"No; you're too good to say so because she's papa's aunt. But she's very good. Don't you think she's very good?"

"I daresay she is. I don't know that I run into superlatives quite as much as you do."

"She has brought me such a handsome present. I could not show it you before them all just now, and it only came down from London this morning. She did not say a word about it before. Look here." Then she slipped her glove off and showed him a diamond ring.

"You should not wear that out of doors."

"I only put it on to show you. Wasn't it good of her? 'Young people of rank ought to wear nice things,' she said, as she gave it me. Wasn't it an odd thing for her to say? and yet I understood her." Lord George frowned, thinking that he also understood the old woman's words, and reminding himself that the ladies of rank at Manor Cross never did wear nice things. "Don't you think it was nice?"

"Of course she is entitled to make you a present if she pleases."

"It pleased me, George."

"I daresay, and as it doesn't displease me all is well. You, however, have quite sense enough to understand that in this house more is thought of—of—of—" he would have said blood, but that he did not wish to hurt her—"more is thought of personal good conduct than of rings and jewels."

"Rings and jewels, and—personal conduct may go together; mayn't they?"

"Of course they may."

"And very often do. You won't think my—personal conduct—will be injured because I wear my aunt's ring?"

When Lord George made his allusion to personal conduct one of her two hands dropped from his arm, and now, as she repeated the words, there was a little sting of sarcasm in her voice.

"I was intending to answer your aunt's opinion that young people ought to wear nice things. No doubt there is at present a great rage for rich ornaments and costly dress, and it was of these she was thinking when she spoke of nice things. When I spoke of personal conduct being more thought of here, I intended to imply that you had come into a family not given to rich ornaments and costly dress. My sisters feel that their position in this world is assured to them without such outward badges, and wish that you should share the feeling."

This was a regular sermon, and to Mary's thinking was very disagreeable, and not at all deserved. Did her husband really mean to tell her that, because his sisters chose to dress themselves down in the country like dowdy old maids whom the world had deserted, she was to do the same up in London? The injustice of this on all sides struck home to her at the moment. They were old, and she was young. They were plain; she was pretty. They were poor; she was rich. They didn't feel any wish to make themselves

what she called "nice." She did feel a very strong wish in that direction. They were old maids; she was a young bride. And then what right had they to domineer over her, and to send word to her through her husband of their wishes as to her manner of dressing? She said nothing at the moment; but she became red, and began to feel that she had power within her to rebel at any rate against her sisters-in-law. There was silence for a moment or so, and then Lord George reverted to the subject.

"I hope you can sympathise with my sisters," he said. He had felt that the hand had been dropped, and had understood something of the reason.

She wished to rebel against them, but by no means wished to oppose him. She was aware, as though by instinct, that her life would be very bad indeed should she fail to sympathise with him. It was still the all-paramount desire of her heart to be in love with him. But she could not bring herself to say that she sympathised with them, in this direct attack that was made on her own mode of thought.

"Of course, they are a little older than I am," she said, hoping to get out of the difficulty.

"And therefore the more entitled to consideration. I think you will own that they must know what is, and what is not, becoming to a lady."

"Do you mean," said she, hardly able to choke a rising sob, "that they—have anything—to find fault with in me?"

"I have said nothing as to finding fault, Mary."

"Do they think that I do not dress as I ought to do?"

"Why should you ask such a question as that?"

"I don't know what else I am to understand, George. Of course I will do anything that you tell me. If you wish me to make any change, I will make it. But I hope they won't send me messages through you."

"I thought you would have been glad to know that they interested themselves about you." In answer to this Mary pouted, but her husband did not see the point.

"Of course they are anxious that you should become one of them. We are a very united family. I do not speak now of my elder brother, who is in a great measure separated from us, and is of a

different nature. But my mother, my sisters, and I, have very many opinions in common. We live together, and have the same way of thinking. Our rank is high, and our means are small. But to me blood is much more than wealth. We acknowledge, however, that rank demands many sacrifices, and my sisters endeavour to make those sacrifices conscientiously. A woman more thoroughly devoted to good works than Sarah I have never even read of. If you will believe this, you will understand what they mean, and what I mean, when we say that here at Manor Cross we think more of personal conduct than of rings and jewels. You wish, Mary, to be one of us; do you not?"

She paused for a moment, and then she answered, "I wish to be always one with you."

He almost wanted to be angry at this, but it was impossible. "To be one with me, dearest," he said, "you must be one also with them."

"I cannot love them as I do you, George. That, I am sure, is not the meaning of being married." Then she thought of it all steadily for a minute, and after that made a further speech. "And I don't think I can quite dress like them. I'm sure you would not like it if I did."

As she said this she put her second hand back upon his arm.

He said nothing further on the subject until he had brought her back to the house, walking along by her side almost mute, not quite knowing whether he ought to be offended with her or to take her part. It was true that he would not have liked her to look like Lady Sarah, but he would have liked her to make some approach in that direction, sufficient to show submission. He was already beginning to fear the absence of all control which would befall his young wife in that London life to which she was to be so soon introduced, and was meditating whether he could not induce one of his sisters to accompany them. As to Sarah, he was almost hopeless. Amelia would be of little or no service, though she would be more likely to ingratiate herself with his wife than the others. Susanna was less strong than Sarah and less amiable than Amelia. And then, how would it be if Mary were to declare that she would rather begin the campaign without any of them?

The young wife, as soon as she found herself alone in her own bedroom, sat

down and resolved that she would never allow herself to be domineered over by her husband's sisters. She would be submissive to him in all things, but his authority should not be delegated to them.

WANTED PARTICULARLY.

SOME persons are "wanted" by the police, for reasons which magistrates may be ready to explain, and which will not be wholly satisfactory to the individuals enquired after. But people are also wanted, not belonging to the bad lot: the rightful owners—if they only knew it—of more or less of this world's goods. Heirs-at-law, next of kin, legatees, creditors, representatives in chancery suits, &c., are advertised for in the newspapers every day; not to come forward to give evidence damaging to themselves, but to claim something which belongs to them. Custodians for the time being of funds not belonging to themselves are desirous of getting rid of the responsibilities of trusteeship, executorship, and the like, and make use of the publicity of the press to aid them. A correspondent of *The Times* has recently given some curious pickings from that journal on the subject.

The number of these advertisements appearing in the great newspapers is occasionally as few as a hundred and thirty per month, sometimes as many as two hundred, averaging probably about a hundred and sixty, and mentioning the names of six or seven hundred persons. From the nature of the subject it follows that these persons include the past owners of the property waiting to be appropriated, and relations more or less near of kin whose names are known. Sometimes the Crown, to which the ownership of property falls in the absence of any other known owner, advertises to that effect, through the solicitor to the Treasury; the sum may be so small as to be hardly worth trying for, but in one case, which occurred last year, it reached the very tempting amount of a hundred and forty thousand pounds. The Lord Chancellor, the official protector of children, wards, heiresses, &c., under a great variety of circumstances, is frequently found among the advertisers for next of kin. He wished recently to ferret out the representatives of a baronet who died a century and a half ago; and, in another instance, those of a husband and

wife whose wedding-day occurred during the reign of Queen Anne.

Other official personages and bodies are in like manner occasionally under the need of advertising for next of kin. The Bank of England wants some one or other to come forward, and assist in a re-transfer of unclaimed stock as dividends in the hands of the Commissioners for the Reduction of the National Debt. One of the High Courts of Justice seeks for information concerning the descendants of a lady who died at the age of ninety-four, early in the present century. Sundry charitable institutions are invited to come forward as the rightful owners of certain bequeathed sums of money.

As may well be expected, many of the difficulties arise from persons having gone to sea, and having "not since been heard of." One instance is that of a man who went to sea twenty-two years ago, and who is entitled, if he be in the land of the living and can prove himself to be so, to a certain residuary estate; while another, whose departure from England took place five years later, "may hear of something greatly to his advantage." Tidings of a person reported to have been drowned in the Merrimac river, forty-five years ago, "will be liberally paid for." The relations of two brothers who were drowned at Montreal are enquired for. A Prussian gentleman, whose name is given, is supposed to have fallen overboard, or to have jumped into the sea, while on board a vessel bound for Mexico. "Being an expert swimmer, he may have been picked up by a passing vessel; if alive, he is implored to make known his whereabouts."

Emigrants, of course, figure largely in the list, either as persons who left property behind them, or as next of kin to whom property is due. In one instance claimants for land in Canada are enquired for; in another, a person, last heard of in Queensland, is entitled to the residuary estate of his brother. Some of the cases are remarkable for the great length of time over which the genealogy or consanguinity has to be investigated. An instance in point is an enquiry for the next of kin of persons who held shares in the West New Jersey Society so far back as a hundred and seventy-eight years ago; certain funds are at their disposal. Still older by nine years is the case of a person who emigrated to America; heirs are wanted in this instance for no less a sum than two millions sterling. Who has had

the handling of the money, or the benefit of the investment, ever since the time of Charles the Second, we are not told.

Certificates of birth, marriage, and death are frequently advertised for, as clues to further enquiries concerning heirs-at-law. A reward of two hundred and fifty pounds is offered for any clue to a marriage settlement, by the relatives of a testator, who, on his death-bed, could only utter the words, "Lincoln's Inn Fields." What might not a skilful novelist make of this extraordinary bit of mystery?

Other applications for heirs-at-law or next of kin are so miscellaneous as to admit of no particular classification; they may be accepted as samples of a very curious and diversified budget. A gentleman in distressed circumstances seeks the representatives of a firm who carried on business in Calcutta sixty years ago. The descendants of a family are required to claim twelve thousand pounds. Enquiry is made for any existing representative of a family living eighty years ago. A father affectionately enquires for a runaway daughter, "who will learn with regret that her mother died recently." A son, who left his home a quarter of a century ago, has been informed, in an advertisement which has appeared at least twenty times, that something greatly to his advantage awaits him. Enquiry is made, not for a particular person, but for information concerning the investments or other property of a gentleman deceased. An expectant legatee is willing to pay handsomely for a clue to some funds, supposed to have been deposited in a bank. A labourer is enquired for to whom a legacy has been left; and several domestic servants are in like good luck. The relatives of a captain, who died suddenly, are requested to communicate with the clergyman of a specified parish. Several sums of money are mentioned for which owners are wanted; while in one instance the relatives of a deceased person would be glad to know the whereabouts of a particular sum of two hundred pounds. A sister will hear of something to her advantage on communicating with her brother. A gunner who deserted from Her Majesty's service, fifteen years ago, is entitled to property under a probate case, or his next of kin if the gunner be dead. Under the Lunacy Regulation Act, advertisements are frequently issued for the representatives of persons of unsound mind. A lady entitled to a legacy left

by her sister is not an uncommon occurrence; but in one instance the advertiser describes the fortunate lady-legatee as having had no fewer than four husbands. Any persons "who think they have a right to the inheritance" of a Spanish spinster, who died at the age of eighty-four, are invited to apply. A gentleman who seems to have had a knack for changing his place of residence, without the desirable accompaniment of paying his debts, left behind him the means of clearing off encumbrances, or else his representatives take that duty upon themselves; his creditors are invited to send in their claims, and his past ubiquity is denoted by describing him as of Woolwich in Kent, Norwood in Surrey, Westbourne Grove, Camberwell, Dover in Kent, and Boulogne-sur-Mer. Two sons are wanted to claim an estate left to them by their father. The father of a child, left under the guardianship of a nurse, is informed that his daughter has died suddenly, to the great grief of the nurse. A person who left Wales twenty years ago is informed that he is entitled to one-third of two farms. A surplus awaits division among the owners of certain slaughter-houses and meat-salesmen's premises, in the neighbourhood of what was till recently Newgate Market. One J. B. is informed that "he has been adjudged bankrupt, and may return home without molestation"—a fact which we hope may prove a solace to him. A lady, rejoicing in the almost unpronounceable name of Zakezewski, and by profession a physician, is wanted with reference to a very important family affair. Unexpected assets of very large amount await the representatives of the creditors of a gentleman who died so long back as a hundred and thirty-five years ago. Whether it would apply equally to Betsy Baker, Barbara Burton, Beatrice Brown, Bertha Blundell, Biddy Brallagan, Blanche Barlow, Bridget Brooks, we are not told; but one advertisement seeks for information concerning a servant whose initials are B. B.; her sister will gratefully thank any lady who can give any news of the said B. B.

So important have advertisements of this kind become, that a work of formidable magnitude has been accomplished in collecting and arranging them. Lists have been made out from time to time, in some instances relating to a particular year, in some to a particular newspaper, and in others again to a specified class of subjects.

These lists have been brought together, and supplemented by a vast amount of research; the files of newspapers have been ransacked, copies of advertisements written out, duplications and repetitions weeded, alphabetical lists of surnames drawn up, and a particular number attached to every advertisement. The result appears in Mr. Chambers's Index to Advertisements for Heirs-at-Law, Next of Kin, Legatees, Missing Friends, Encumbrances, Creditors, Representatives in Chancery Suits, &c. Three or four editions of the work have been issued, and we may fairly assume that the chief purchasers are solicitors, conveyancers, and the like. A more unreadable book, in itself, can hardly be imagined, page after page of numerals and surnames, with nothing concerning the "life, character, and behaviour" of the individuals referred to. Everything that can be ferreted out and brought together for the last hundred and fifty years is here collected, arranged in the alphabetical order of surnames. One entry may consist, say, of "21476, Martindale, Robert," nothing more. Who Robert Martindale was; when he lived and died; what is the meaning of 21476; in what newspaper, and at what date, the advertisement appeared; and what is the nature of the property which is seeking an owner, are questions which the volume leaves unanswered. A slight additional information is given in cases where several persons have exactly the same surname and christian-name, just sufficient to give one end of a clue. Thus, there are several John Smiths, each the hero of one particular advertisement; to distinguish them one from another, a word or so is appended to each—such as York; Middlesex; died abroad; yeoman; Treasury; army-surgeon; Ireland; Scotland; son of Hannah; Islington; seaman; Worcester; farmer; Willesden Hill; merchant; legatee; Gibraltar. Among several Mary Browns, the distinctive words are Lincoln; daughter of James; Cambridge; Mrs. (Middlesex); widow; Sydney; late butcher; London; Ann; Anne (Surrey).

As all indexes are valuable in proportion to the readiness of the means of reference to the work referred to, so is the index to heirs-at-law really of service only to those who can get hold of its compiler; for he, and he only, possesses the key to the various solutions. He is ready to furnish actual copies of the advertisements, or the dates and names of newspapers where they

are to be found. If a number and a name, as entered in the index, become a subject of further enquiry, he refers to other documents in his own keeping, which enable him to identify them with a particular advertisement. He can give information more or less complete, either in the form of verbatim copies of advertisements, or by a specific reference to the particular newspaper where it appeared in print. Sometimes the information sought, is simply whether a person of a particular name is probably the same as one of the persons named in the index; leaving for further enquiry all particulars concerning the property that is waiting for an owner. Besides the index, the compiler has in his possession a large budget of information relating to persons who have died intestate in America, India, Australia, and other foreign or colonial countries. These services are unlocked by means of the same gold and silver keys which unlock so many other treasures in the world.

Several public establishments have at all times vast sums of money under their charge, not belonging to themselves, and yet not distributable, because the rightful owners are either unknown or unreachable. The Court of Chancery is the holder of more than sixty millions sterling, suitors' stock and cash, of which a large portion awaits claimants. Another sum of notable amount is in the hands of the Bank of England, in the shape of unclaimed dividends; nearly a million sterling of this is interest or dividends on the funds constituting the National Debt, and is, we believe, placed at the disposal of the Government until claimants appear, although the Bank is still the trustee so far as the public are concerned. It may well appear surprising to many of us, that a sum of no less than a million and a half sterling is waiting to be claimed by soldiers and sailors, or their representatives, in the form of prize-money. So much routine and red tape are concerned in determining the distribution of prize-money or bounty among a large number of men, that many of the poor fellows die off before their share is ready for them; and then the War Office and the Admiralty do not well know what to do with the money, unless some representatives of the deceased men come forward. There is a sum of money always in the hands of the Admiralty, representing the wages and small personal belongings of seamen who have died, and whose representatives are not known

to the Government; John Bull owes something to Jack Tar, and is ready to pay if he knows to whom to hand over the money.

There is another class of wants, every day the subject of advertisements in the newspapers, more closely connected with the feelings than with the pocket. These emanate from persons who are temporarily separated from friends by domestic and other causes. Wives appealing to runaway husbands; fathers who offer forgiveness to scapegrace sons; parents who fear that an absent daughter is on the road to ruin, which a paternal home may possibly prevent from becoming ruin absolute; sisters who beseech a brother to return to a domestic hearth, which his absence has made desolate and miserable—all these appeals are to be met with in the "agony column" of *The Times*; but the curious matters treated in this article are of a more prosaic kind; prosaic, nevertheless, in a way highly satisfactory to some or other of the persons immediately concerned.

A LAST GLASS OF WINE.

HOLD it up, higher yet, and nearer to the light, the liquid ruby of the Gascon grape, and as the ruddy glow gleams through the brimming crystal, eye it lovingly, yet with a soft regret, for we shall look upon its like no more. Madeira is gone, and claret must follow, to the limbo of the lost. Already, from the frontiers of Italy to the borders of Spain, they are tearing up the useless vines, and breaching the walls of long-respected vineyards. Hot Languedoc, sunny Provence, are now as bare of their most cherished crop, as are the bleakest plains of the *Sologne*, or the wildest heath in *Brittany*. And the vine-plague spreads and spreads, unchecked, unstemmed, by all that industry and science can effect. How serious is the evil can be measured only by the recollection, that seven million French depend for daily bread on the now perishing vine.

The cause of all this mischief is a little insect of American origin, which is reputed to have been accidentally brought over to Paris by the *Acclimatisation Society*. Be this as it may, that terrible importation, the *phylloxera*, has fixed its habitat but too firmly in the country of its adoption. It devours tender branch and slender stem,

green leaf and juicy tendril; and having lived for billions of generations on the wild vines of the transatlantic forest, it has come at last to flesh its microscopic teeth on the nascent vintage of plants, the mellow life-blood of which has mantled in the golden goblets of old kings, and the silver banaps of mighty merchants of long ago. Nature's own open-air laboratory, whence came the cool claret of our grandfathers, the contents of the cobwebbed magnum, the "yellow seal" and the "green seal," of *Meg Dods*, and similar old-fashioned landladies, cannot bar out the American invader, and must yield, body and soul, to the inroad of the imperious insect.

The vine-growers made a brave fight. Warned by their experience of the *oidium*, that fell blight which had been to them what the potato disease was to the *Island of Saints*, they presented no inert phalanx to the enemy. They called chemist and engineer to the rescue. The *phylloxera* could be poisoned. Quick! let sulphuret of carbon by the hogshhead, sulpho-carbonate of potash by the ton, be sprinkled over tainted leaf and bough. The *phylloxera* could be drowned. Snatch the spade, then, and cut channels through which water from the river, the mountain torrent, anything, may run, to flood the vineyard. Make irrigation-canals; build dam and weir; submerge the district, so that the last of the baleful brood may perish utterly. The contagion may be checked. Yes, let vines be grubbed up and burned, and girdle the place with fire, and sow the soil with salt, and sprinkle it with quicklime and chlorates, and establish a sanitary cordon, through which no insect, or insect's egg, can pass!

In vain. All in vain. The *phylloxera* was too mighty for chemist, and engineer, and husbandman, to grapple with. His legions laughed at their strategy. He burrowed through the soil, and, tiny sapper and miner that he was, made his unseen approaches to the tough roots of the great vines. He tunnelled beneath the bark, worked his hidden way to where his prey awaited him, and batten on the young shoots and budding leaves. Government commissions found him a troublesome rebel, more irreconcilable than any communist. Even the patient research of the naturalist, microscope in hand, has failed to find out anything to the *phylloxera's* disadvantage. Of what use is it to kill

him by millions? So rapid is his reproduction, that myriads spring into life where but a germ is left. Chemicals are wasted on him. Frost does but levy a poll-tax on his numbers. Starvation only must bring about the extermination of the phylloxera.

Many remedies have been tried. That quick eyes and sharp little bills might make short work with him, the French vine-dresser has shown an unusual tolerance to small birds, and American insects that eat the phylloxera have been imported to thin the ranks of the hereditary quarry. American grape-vines, too, have been brought in, and for a time the grim insect has declined to touch them. But the American vines, the grapes of which never gave such must as that which foams crimson in French vats, soon acquired a Gallic delicacy, that made them toothsome to the destroyer, and they too were stripped to bare poles. Throughout the chief wine-producing regions of France, the puny foe has triumphed, and the principal product of the rich South seems doomed to absolute extinction.

One glance at the map will show over how wide an area this insect Attila has carried havoc and ruin. From Béziers to the Rhone the villages are half unpeopled, the labourers having wandered away in search of work where there are yet vines to trim and grapes to crush. The peasant proprietors have torn up the ugly stubs of their once sacred vines, and are at their wits' end to know by what crop they can replace them. For the plant of Bacchus loves a stony, arid soil of crumbling limestone, unfit for wheat or beetroot, for tobacco or maize, and where neither roots nor grain can well be cultivated. Hérault and Gard are desolate, and in the Bordeaux country a desperate struggle has for six years been maintained between the phylloxera and the wine-grower, in which the indomitable insect slowly and surely wins. The exporters of La Rochelle shake their heads over the dismal news from the banks of the Charente, where the strong, full-bodied wines from which costliest cognac was distilled, shall fill the giant vats with purple foam no more. Brandy, henceforth, may be made from malt or molasses, or at best, from the dusky grape-juice of Aragon, but from French wine, its legitimate parent, it can hardly, in the lifetime of this generation, be made.

It is with something of a shudder, that the lover of good living learns that the

phylloxera has broken into Burgundy, that the minor growths are suffering from his remorseless appetite, and that the grand old vineyards, every one of which is more valuable than a coal-mine, are in hourly risk of being invaded. The sword of Damocles swings by a flimsy thread over such properties as that of glorious Clos Vougeot, the exact history of which, thanks to the carefully kept registers of its monkish proprietors, we know, and which has been a vineyard for nine hundred and seventy years. Champagne is as yet intact, and perhaps some respite may be given to the sparkling growths of Ay and Epernay, while the sour petit bleu of the north-central departments has not been affected by the prevailing plague.

Deplorable as is the loss to French agriculture and commerce, some consolation might be felt by the consumer, could he but believe that the worst of the evil was known or guessed. Claret, champagne, and Burgundy might become mournful memories, while sherry, hock, port, and the cheaper wines of Hungary, Italy, and Spain did their best to replace them. But the phylloxera respects no frontiers. The most stringent cordon of Custom-house officers would fail to shut him out. Already, in the summer of 1876, the insect pest has made its unwelcome appearance in southern Switzerland. The vines of the Jura and the Vaud are now exposed to the ravages of the same devourers that have wasted Languedoc and spoiled Provence; while alarmists already predict the day when, from the Rhine to the Bosphorus, there shall not remain a wine-press at work, or a vineyard otherwise than ragged and bare, with yellowed leaves and drooping bines.

There are, fortunately, other quarters of the world whence wine can come to gladden the hearts of consumers stinted of their familiar beverage. America and Australia, under the stimulus of commercial competition, could no doubt fill our cellars with something choicer than Catawba and Geelong. Cape growths might improve, and even Fiji produce a malmsey comparable to the royal nectar of antique Madeira. But if London and Paris are to run after strangely-called vintages, pains must be taken to render the liquor fit for civilised palates. The traditions of a trade, like those of the fine arts, do not grow up, like Jack's wondrous beanstalk, in a night; and, in addition to capital and science, the patient, loving skill of the

European vine-dresser and wine-grower will have to be called into requisition, before the New World can restore the balance of the Old.

THE BURIED CHIME.

UNDER the cliffs at Whitby, when the great tides
landward flow,
Under the cliffs at Whitby, when the great winds
landward blow,

When the long billows heavily roll o'er the harbour
bar,
And the blue waves flash to silver, 'mid the seaweeds
on the Scar,

When the low thunder of the surf calls down the
hollow shore,
And 'mid the caves at Kettleness, the baffled breakers
roar;

Under the cliffs at Whitby, who so will stand alone,
Where in the shadow of the Nab, the eddies swirl
and moan,

When to the pulses of the deep, the flood tide rising
swells,
Will hear amid its monotone, the clash of hidden
bells.

Up from the heart of ocean the mellow music peals,
Where the sunlight makes his golden path, and the
sea-mew flits and wheels.

For many a chequered century, untired by flying
time,
The bells, no human fingers touch, have rung their
hidden chime,

Since the gallant ship that brought them, for the
abbey on the height,
Struck and foundered in the offing, with her sacred
goal in sight.

And the man who dares on Hallowe'en, on the black
Nab to watch,
Till the rose-light on St. Hilda's shrine, the midnight
moonbeams catch,

And calls his sweetheart by her name, as o'er the
sleeping seas
The echo of the buried bells comes floating on the
breeze,

Ere another moon on Hallowe'en, her eerie rays has
shed,
Will hear his wedding peal ring out, from the church
tower on the head.

THE MAN AT THE WHEEL.

A STORY IN TWO CHAPTERS. CHAPTER I.

"No, gentlemen," said our skipper, flinging his dripping sou'-wester through the open door of his private cabin, and wringing the water from his thick beard and moustache, as he clawed his way along the backs of the carefully lashed and cleated benches, to where we were seated at the cuddy-table of the Queen of the Baltic. "No, gentlemen, I'm sorry to spoil sport, 'specially such an evening as this; but I can't have any of that aboard of my ship. Anything to oblige, in reason, you know. We'll screw down the valves, if you like, and see what her plates 'll stand; or you can go below into the spirit-room and play

pitch-and-toss with a box of Lucifer-matches, and I'll have the donkey rigged, and the hose stretched along, and chance it. But I've had one lesson off just such another little infernal machine as you've got there, and please the Lord I don't want another."

It was certainly, as the captain said, the sort of evening that might excuse a good deal in the way of any attempt at mitigating its horrors. I have been at sea often enough when it was blowing "great guns," but now, for the last hour and more, it had been, as the skipper himself acknowledged, blowing regular Woolwich infants. The "wild and stormy steep" of Elsinore—about as flat and low-lying a piece of coast, by-the-way, as any within my acquaintance—lay under our lee, only a very few miles off, as we knew, but fairly hidden from sight by the low, driving clouds, that seemed to touch our very mast-heads, and press the thick black smoke from the funnels right down upon our streaming deck. The muddy sea, too shallow for an honest ocean roll, too much "humbugged about," as our growling old sea-dog of a quartermaster phrased it, by contrary sets and currents, to run steadily in any one direction, tumbled and foamed, and deluged us every moment fore and aft, now from this side, now from that, as the long narrow steamer, loaded "within an inch of her life" with railway metals, lurched and plunged as though each staggering dive would be her last. We had stayed on deck till we were fairly washed off it, and since then had beguiled the time as best we might in the cuddy, from which even such daylight as was to be had outside was excluded by the heavy tarpaulin nailed and battened down over the skylight, that had already been partially stove-in by one unusually spiteful sea. The lamps had been lighted; an extra stove, carefully secured, and with one of the crew told off to mount special guard over it, slung in the forward part of the cabin, where the water had come in most freely. The usual embargo upon smoking below-deck had been taken off, and everything done to make existence as endurable as under the circumstances was in any way possible. Still it was more or less the pursuit of pleasure under difficulties, and when one of our number suddenly remembered that he had a toy roulette on board, and offered to start a bank with a five-shilling maximum, the proposal was hailed with delight by the whole party.

We had just made our game for the

first time. The little ball had been started upon its travels, and the inevitable lurch had straightway sent it, with cylinder, stakes, and players, pell-mell into the lee scuppers, where two or three of the more enthusiastic of the latter were still chasing errant shillings and sixpences, whilst the rest of us were engaged in an animated discussion as to the best means of avoiding a similar catastrophe in the future, when a louder howl than usual from without gave notice that the door of the companion had been opened for a moment, and, amid a hissing shower of salt-white spray, the captain made his appearance amongst us.

"Very sorry, gentlemen, I am indeed," he repeated, as a pretty general chorus of remonstrance greeted his, as it seemed, rather arbitrary veto upon our anticipated distraction. "I am not an unaccommodating kind of chap, now, am I, gentlemen? And when I ask you as a favour——"

"Say no more, captain," cried the owner of the roulette, turning the little cylinder bottom upward in token of surrender. "You have treated us well, and if you put it in that way—— But tell us, now, what makes you so set against my poor little wheel here. Did you ever try your hand at it?"

"No, sir," answered the skipper, slowly. "I never did, and, please God, I never will. But that little wheel—or the twin-brother of it—lost me the best friend I ever had, and the finest ship I ever sailed in. If you gentlemen like to hear about it, it's a bit clearer now, and I can leave the deck for a quarter of an hour or so, I don't mind telling you the story."

"Hear, hear! The yarn, captain, by all means. Steward! a glass of grog here for the captain."

Captain Walderson smiled, took a long slow pull at his grog with a thoughtful air, and began his story.

"It's four-and-twenty years ago I'm speaking of, gentlemen—four-and-twenty years come the seventeenth of this month, and a black day that's been in my calendar ever since. I was a youngster then, as you may suppose; in fact, it was my first voyage to sea, and very nigh it was to being my last, as you shall hear.

"I think I've heard you say, sir," he went on, turning to me, "that you were in Port Philip—that's Victoria they call it now—in 1852? And no doubt but you'll recollect the little hundreds of vessels there was lying there rotting in

Hudson's Bay because they couldn't get crews to take them home?"

I nodded assent.

"You don't happen to remember, perhaps, one very fine ship among them, pretty nigh the biggest there she was, called the Helen Macdonald?"

"Do you mean," I asked, after a moment's consideration, "a ship of about two thousand tons, painted all black? There was some story about the steward having lived on board of her all alone for twelve months and more?"

"That's her, sir. No gentleman with any eye for a ship could miss her. One of the first of the Aberdeen clippers she was, and a real beauty as ever I saw. Old Dowman—that's the steward—he was the only man left on board her when captain, and officers, and crew all ran for the diggings, and he lived on board of her all alone for pretty nigh another year after you knew her, and never set foot on shore but twice all the time.

"Well, sir, you may suppose our owners didn't care about having their finest ship, and she on her maiden voyage too, lying there rotting at her anchors, and they sent old Dowman out board to get her home, at pretty well any price. But, Lord bless you! hands weren't to be got there for love or money. Many's the ordinary seaman has asked and got one hundred pounds for the run home, and many a hundred have turned up their noses at the offer and gone off to Ballarat with their picks over their shoulders, to die, in a mouldy hole, of drink and dysentery like the fools they were. And the Helen Macdonald wasn't like one of your small craft, or even like one of the old tea-waggons that you might bring round the Horn with a man and a boy if you'd only got biscuit enough on board, and didn't mind a few weevils in it. There was no heaving her to of a night and turning in, making quite sure you'd find her there in the morning. Five-and-thirty or forty hands she'd take to handle her at the least, and there'd need be some seamen among them too.

"At last the owners had pretty well given up all hopes of her, when one day, just as Mr. Baldwin—that's the senior partner—was leaving the office in Fenchurch-street, one of the mates in the employ came in and asked to see him on most particular business.

"Well, my lad," says he, putting on his great-coat all the time, 'what is it?'

"I think, sir," says the mate, 'that if

you'll trust the job to me, I can get home the Helen Macdonald for you right away.'

"Mr. Baldwin stopped short, with the velvet collar of his coat all up about his ears, and stared at him for a moment, as if not quite sure that he mightn't have been drinking a little.

"The devil you do,' said he.

"Yes, sir,' says poor Harry Corbett; 'I've been thinking it over for some time now, and, if so be you're agreeable, I think I can have her in the East India Docks within seven months from this time, and not cost very much neither.'

"Mr. Baldwin turned down his collar, took off his hat, and sat down. He knew something of Harry Corbett, who had the name of being one of the smartest young fellows in the employ, and there was something in his way of speaking that showed he'd got a notion in his head.

"What's your plan?' said he.

"It's this, sir,' said Harry; 'you've sent out men already for her I know, and they've cut and run as soon as ever they got their foot on Liardet's Beach. But it seems to me that the plan's never been tried fairly yet.'

"Ah! Indeed?'

"No, sir; I think—begging your pardon—you've made two mistakes. In the first place, you should have picked your men instead of taking pretty well any you could get. In the second place, you should never have let them set foot on shore at all.'

"And how would you prevent it?'

"Well, sir, my notion is this: you know old Dowman writes that small craft sell very well out there for the coasting-trade. Now, sir, if you'll give me a handy little brig of say a hundred and fifty or two hundred tons, I'll pick up a crew, half of steady old hands that won't want to run, and half of young apprentices that won't be up to it just at first. We'll write word to old Dowman, to get his papers ready, and keep his house-flag flying. I'll take the brig in early in the morning, lay her right alongside of the Helen, clap the men on board, and get her and them fairly outside the Heads before night comes on.'

"Mr. Baldwin sat for a minute or two thinking.

"There's something in your idea, Corbett,' he said at last. 'Look in again tomorrow at two o'clock, and we'll talk about it. Who is that lad with you?'

"He's the son of an old friend of mine, sir, that was lost at sea three years ago, and I'm looking after him a bit. I

was thinking, if I went, of taking him with me.'

"All right. You couldn't do better. Remember—two o'clock. Good-day.' And as we went out Mr. Baldwin rang his bell, and sent for his managing clerk to talk the matter over with him.

"Well, gentlemen, I need not tell you that, when we went back next day, we found everything settled. Mr. Baldwin was already in negotiation for the purchase of a very smart little brig, that had been lying in the West India Docks for sale for some weeks past, and the letter of instructions to old Dowman on board the Helen Macdonald was lying on his table awaiting his signature when we were shown in. That same afternoon all arrangements were concluded, and before a fortnight had passed we were working down Channel in the teeth of a stiffish sou'-wester, with as much beef and biscuit on board as would victual the big ship for her voyage home, without having to send so much as a boat ashore till we sighted the Foreland lights again.

"That was something like a run out. We had five-and-forty hands on board, all told—a regular man-of-war's crew, and we carried on man-of-war fashion, I can tell you. You don't often see a merchant craft reef topsails in stays; but in our bit of a cockle-shell—barely one hundred and twenty tons she was—five-and-forty men could do pretty well what they pleased; and with a smart fellow like poor Harry Corbett in command, you may depend upon it the little brig soon learned to do everything but speak. It was in just sixty-seven days and eight hours, from leaving our moorings at Gravesend, that we sighted Port Philip Head. All that night we lay to outside, as poor Harry had proposed, and with daylight we ran in, picked up our pilot, and before noon had brought the brig to an anchor close alongside the Helen Macdonald.

"In three hours more the stock had been got on board; the Helen's topsails were sheeted home, the anchor short stay apeak—we had to unshackle one of the cables to get the turns out—and all ready for a start; when just at the last moment we discovered that one of the boats was missing, and that, in spite of everything, a dozen of our best hands had taken the 'fever,' and fairly given us the slip.

"For a few minutes things looked a little ugly. Some of the men who were left objected to putting to sea what they

called short-handed, and wanted the captain at all events to wait over the night, and see if the deserters could not be got back. A still more serious remonstrance was made, though privately, by the boat-swain, a thorough seaman, and steady as old Time, who took poor Harry aside and warned him that, after being neglected for more than two years, the Helen's gear was anything but trustworthy.

But Harry knew what lying there for the night meant.

"'Before daylight to-morrow, Ben,' he said, 'the Helen's fore-castle would be just as empty as it was this morning.'

"And old Ben shook his head, and admitted that it was so.

"So Harry made the men a little speech; promised to divide the wages of the deserters among them; served out an extra ration of grog, and before sundown the second anchor was swinging from the catheads, and the Helen Macdonald was fairly on her way homewards. So determined, indeed, was he not to run the risk of losing any more hands, that, though it had fallen dark before we got to the Heads, he wouldn't even wait till morning to cross the bar, but took her straight out without so much as heaving to. As we drew fairly outside, and beyond danger, he drew a long deep breath, stood quite silent for nearly a minute, then gave me a slap on the shoulder that nearly knocked me off the break of the poop on to the main deck, and said:

"'We've done it, Teddy, my boy, and my fortune's made—and yours too!'

"Then, springing into the mizen rigging, he took off his cap and sang out at the top of his voice:

"'Hurrah! my lads. Three cheers for Old England and double wages!'

"The men had been a bit sulky up to that time, not quite liking the being carried off to sea again quite so sharply, even though they had signed for it in their articles. But they got all right now, gave the three cheers with a will, and set to at their work heartily.

"And their work was cut out too. Hitherto all had gone smoothly enough, but, from the time we turned our head homewards, luck seemed to leave us. As old Ben had said, and as we of course knew must be the case, most of the gear was pretty nearly as rotten as it could hold together. The standing rigging was tolerably sound, though even that wanted a deal of setting up and looking after.

But as for the running gear, you couldn't sheet home a sail or brace up a yard, but sheet or brace would come home in your hands, and leave spars and canvas flying about anyhow.

"However, we worked like men to get things a bit shipshape, and, if the fine weather had only held on another week, should have been right enough. Harry, who, though full of dash and daring, was too good a sailor to run needless risks, would not venture with his ship in this half-crippled state to take her into anything like high latitudes, but went up to the northward of New Zealand, and kept, as it might be, along the edge of the south-east trade. It was a goodish bit longer track of course, but he reckoned on having lighter weather. And so indeed we had for a month and more, when, just as we were almost right, and he was thinking of hauling to the southward before the week was out, down comes a squall that takes all the topgallant-masts out of her, and springs the foretop-mast so badly, that there's nothing for it but to shift the spar altogether and send up a new one.

"We thought ourselves lucky in being within easy reach of the islands, and Harry determined on running her in to refit. I've often heard the parson say how little we could tell what was likely and what was not, and I never hear him say it but what I think of that time. I'd give the five best years' pay I ever earned, that those accursed islands had been a thousand miles dead to windward of us!

"Not but what we enjoyed ourselves well enough at the time. There isn't more beautiful scenery in any part of the world than you'll find in these Pacific Islands, nor a finer climate for those who are not afraid of a little heat. For the whole month and more we lay there we never saw a cloud, and most part of the day the pitch would be bubbling up out of the seams, and you'd have to keep the cover on the binnacle for fear the little dabs of sealing-wax stuck under the compass-card to balance it should melt, as I've seen them do myself, and the card turn right up on its side, like a dandy soldier's cap or a shark gorging a bit of pork. Yet all the time the air would be so fresh and pure that you hardly knew it was hot at all till you felt the skin peeling off your face, or pretty near blistered your fingers taking up a marlinespike that had been lying in the sun. I used to think nothing of walking

ten or a dozen miles up among the mountains, through the coffee and rice grounds, and among the great waving cocoanut-trees, till we'd come upon some mountain-pool with its deep, clear, dark green water, and the great broad-leaved ferns and plantains hanging over it, and perhaps half-a-dozen native girls laughing and diving and plunging in and out, and caring no more for us than if they'd really been made of bronze, as they looked to be, or had been just so many tame ducks in a farmyard pond.

"Then at night the canoes would be out two or three hundred strong, each with its huge flaring torch in its bows, at which the flashing flying-fish would leap like moths, till we could hardly haul them quickly enough out of the nets spread for them; and big, queer-shaped fishes would come looming up through the clear water with every scale on their backs shining like burnished silver with the phosphorescence, and spiteful-looking sharks would rise just under you, so close that you could drive a boathook right into their ugly jaws; and every now and then there would be a splash and a little fountain of diamonds thrown up, and a long streak of light shooting down to the bottom, fifty fathoms deep, as some native diver would go right in among them to bring us up a great pink or blue shell, or branch of coral, or huge oyster with, mayhap, a pearl or two in it.

"And there were other amusements, too, not quite so harmless; for drink is plentiful out there and morals easy, and I doubt if ever a ship's crew is much improved by being berthed for any time alongside a coral reef. Several of our smartest lads spent their liberty in a way they might have regretted all their lives. It mattered little enough for that, however, poor fellows, as things turned out; while, as for poor Harry Corbett, it was neither drink nor dissipation that ruined him—and he the noblest fellow and finest seaman that ever trod a plank!

"You'll laugh at me perhaps when I tell you that, boy as I was, I seemed to have a sort of presentiment of what was coming. But so it was. I've often heard say that dumb creatures have a sort of instinct in this way, and that a man or a woman that horses and dogs don't take to must have something wrong with them somewhere; and I've a notion myself that children are a little in the same way. It looks like it in this case, at all events.

"Of course when the Helen Macdonald came dragging into port in a breeze that hardly darkened the water, with all three topgallants struck and a reef in the fore-topsail, it was pretty clear to the people on shore what she had put in there for. The anchor was hardly down before a handsome whaleboat, rowed by four tattooed natives, was alongside, and the steersman—a tall, handsome fellow in Panama hat, spotless white shirt and trousers, canvas shoes, red silk sash, and no jacket, who had handled his heavy twenty-foot oar as lightly and easily as a Spanish girl flirts her fan—was down in the captain's cabin settling the terms on which the repairs were to be done over a glass of grog and a cheroot. Poor Harry took to the stranger at once. Before the day was out he was a favourite with everyone on board. With everyone on board, that is to say, except me. I took a dislike to him—a perfectly blind and unreasonable dislike, but none the less strong for that—from the first moment he set foot on our deck.

"That night we stayed on board, and the new comer—Pickering his name was—stayed with us, examining into all the details of the work that had to be done, taking measurements, and arranging everything with Harry and the mate. There was a spare topmast on the booms, of course, but it had never been a very well-seasoned spar, and after its three years' exposure was decided to be quite untrustworthy. So a new one had to be obtained, and the next day Harry went ashore with Mr. Pickering to choose it. He took me with him, and a very pleasant day we had; and that night we slept at Mr. Pickering's bungalow, about half a mile outside the little town.

"It was a simple place enough, built of wood, and only one storey high, of course. The high-pitched roof, thatched three feet thick with long reeds, projected six or seven feet all round, so as to make a wide verandah, the north and west sides of which were shut in, like the windows of the house itself, by thick grass mats, kept constantly closed and wet while the sun was on them, and clewed up at night to let in the breeze. There was not much furniture about—just two or three long grass hammocks in the verandah, a heavy table, and half-a-dozen cane chairs in the sitting-room, one swinging shelf with perhaps a dozen books on it, and in a corner of the room a little wheel just like that of yours. I wondered what it was for when I first

caught sight of it, which was not for some minutes—for on first coming in from the hot sunlight outside the room was as dark as pitch. I found out all about it afterwards, to my sorrow.

"It wasn't brought out that first night, however. There were still plenty of things to talk and settle about, and Harry had done a long day's work, and was tired and glad to turn in in one of the grass hammocks in the verandah, where Mr. Pickering and I occupied two others. Before many days were over, however, the work was all in train, and as the mate was a thoroughly trustworthy officer, Harry had comparatively little to do. Then one night as they sat in the verandah smoking their cheroots, and watching the fire-flies dancing in and out among the huge creepers that climbed all over it, Mr. Pickering called to his Chinese servant, and bade him bring out the wheel from the corner of the dining-room, and set it on the little round table between them.

"Ever try your hand at anything of this kind, Captain Corbett?" he asked.

"No. Harry hadn't even so much as heard of a roulette-wheel, and Mr. Pickering had to explain it all to him, while I sat and listened, and thought how simple it all sounded, and what an easy game it must be to win at. We used to play at commerce, I remembered, sometimes at home, before father died; but I had been quite a little chap then, and never thoroughly understood how the 'fishes' came and went, or why I used to get a penny a dozen for mine at the end. But this seemed all as natural as possible, and when by-and-by they began to play, and the little ball went running round and round, always, as it seemed to me, hopping at last into just the very hole that was wanted for Harry to win, I thought there never was such a game, and was quite vexed when Harry, who was a deal more careful of me than of himself, told me laughingly that gambling wasn't good for little boys, and wouldn't let me put my sixpence on the thirty-three, which had already turned up twice running, and which actually did come up again, so that I should have won seventeen shillings. As for Harry, he only played on the black and red, but before the evening was over, he had won nearly five pounds.

"What's the matter with you, you young monkey?" he asked, good-humouredly pulling my ear as I sat very silent, and I'm afraid a trifle sulky, in

the stern-sheets alongside him, as we pulled on board.

"I muttered something about my seventeen shillings, and about his wishing to keep all the luck to himself.

"No, Dick," he said, 'you're wrong there. I won't let you gamble, not even in a mild way like this, because I promised your mother I wouldn't. But half of all I make this voyage goes to give you a start in the world, whatever it is, and however it comes. So don't you be afraid of not having your share of the luck.'

"Ah, poor Harry! He little thought what luck it was that night's work was to bring him, or how many were to have a share in it."

HOW OLD WAS HAMLET?

THE Hamlet of the theatre may be of any age, varying, let us say, between seventeen and seventy; and usually, it must be said of him, that he appears to be somewhat stricken in years. Mr. F. A. Marshall, whose ingenious Study of Hamlet contains many valuable practical hints to the performer, recommends that the representative of Hamlet "should try and look as young as he can, without having recourse to much paint." But sometimes all the trying in the world will fail to bring about youthfulness of aspect. "We wish he would wear a wig," wrote a critic, in 1830, of Mr. Young, the tragedian, "for the paucity of his own hair makes him look extremely old." The best of wigs, however, whether of flowing flaxen, or of that revived Brutus pattern, which dates from the first French Revolution, will not always enable an old actor to appear like a young Hamlet. False hair will do something, and the art of "making up" generally may do much; but there are wrinkles which are like trenches that may not be carried by assault. Moreover, declining years are apt to be attended by an increase of corpulence, which is a formidable redoubt, very hard to sap or reduce in any way.

It is understood, however, that Hamlet, the Hamlet of the poet no less than the Hamlet of the playhouse, may fairly be credited with a certain amplitude of waist and general portliness. "Our son is fat and scant of breath," remarks Queen Gertrude. There are students whose confined and sedentary life makes them pale and wan; but Hamlet was perhaps constitutionally of plethoric habit. Stress may not be laid upon his reference to his "too

solid flesh," for he had here, perhaps, in view less his own form than a figure of speech; but it may be noted that he had, upon his own showing, "foregone all custom of exercises"—an abstinence which must have induced to corpulence—although this statement is hardly to be reconciled with his admission before his duel, that he has been "in continual practice" with the foils since Laertes had left Denmark for France. The fatness of Hamlet, however, has been frequently ascribed to the fact, that the leading actors of Shakespeare's time, for whom he contrived his plays, were rather obese gentlemen, whose physical condition had to be borne in mind by contemporary dramatists.

The tragedy of Hamlet, as Mr. Payne Collier conjectures, was first brought upon the stage in the winter of 1601, or the spring of 1602; for, under date the 26th July, 1602, appeared an entry of publication in the books of the Stationers' Company—"A Booke, The Revenge of Hamlett prince of Denmarke, as it was lately acted by the Lord Chamberleyn his servants." The players of Shakespeare's time, whom rumour or tradition has credited with the impersonation of Hamlet, are three in number—Joseph Taylor, John Lowin, and Richard Burbadge. In 1602 Burbadge was, perhaps, about thirty-five years of age; Lowin, about twenty-six; Taylor could scarcely have been more than seventeen. Were they all fat? "Taylor," writes Davies, in his *Dramatic Miscellanies*, "is generally allowed to be the original Hamlet, and at the time the words of 'fat and scant of breath' were put into the queen's mouth, he might have been plumper of person than the author wished he should be for the actor of young Hamlet." Striplings of seventeen are rarely fat, however. And the evidence that Taylor was the first Hamlet is by no means conclusive. Wright, in his *Historia Histrionica*, 1699, says simply that "Taylor acted Hamlet incomparably well." Downes, in his *Roscius Anglicanus*, 1708, records of the performance of Hamlet in 1662, that "Sir William Davenant, having seen Mr. Taylor of the Blackfriars' Company act it, who had been instructed by the author, Mr. Shakespeare, taught Mr. Betterton in every particle of it, gained him esteem and reputation superlative to all other plays." Neither Wright nor Downes in his own person could have known anything of the original performance of Hamlet. Taylor, as Mr. Collier suggests,

may have taken the part as the "double" of Burbadge, when he was unable to appear; for Burbadge Mr. Collier holds to have been without question the first Hamlet. "And we may be sure," he adds, "that Burbadge did not relinquish so prominent and applauded a character until his death"—which happened in 1619, three years after the death of Shakespeare. It will be seen that Davies's supposition that Taylor was plump of person rests altogether upon the doubtful assumption that he was the first Hamlet. In truth, we are without information on the subject of Taylor's figure, and there is no saying for certain whether he was or not fat or lean. In 1602 Taylor was, perhaps, more likely to be playing Ophelia than Hamlet.

The claim of Lowin to be the first Hamlet rests merely upon the statement of one John Roberts, who, describing himself as "a strolling player," published in 1729 "an Answer to Mr. Pope's Preface to Shakespeare, being a Vindication of the old actors who were the publishers and performers of that author's plays." Lowin, however, did not join the association of King James's players, of which Shakespeare was a member, till 1603—a year after the date assigned to the production of Hamlet. Trueman, the old cavalier who takes part in the dialogue contained in Wright's *Historia Histrionica*, after stating that Shakespeare—who, as he had heard, "was a much better poet than player"—Burbadge, Flemmings, and others "of the older sort," were dead before he knew the town, proceeds to record that in his time "before the wars Lowin used to act with mighty applause Falstaff, Morose, Volpone, Mammon in *The Alchemist*, and Melantius in *The Maid's Tragedy*." To this list Roberts, the strolling player, adds the characters of Hamlet and Henry the Eighth. That Lowin played Henry the Eighth seems probable. Downes, in his *Roscius Anglicanus*, in allusion to the production of the play of King Henry the Eighth at the theatre in Lincoln's-inn-fields, in 1664, writes: "The part of the king was so right and justly done by Mr. Betterton, he being instructed in it by Sir William Davenant, who had it from old Mr. Lowin, that had his instructions from Mr. Shakespeare, that I dare and will aver none can or ever will come near him in this age in the performance of that part." But there is want of support for Roberts's statement that Lowin played Hamlet, assuming Roberts to mean that

Lowin was the original Hamlet. He might have played the part after Burbadge, or even after Taylor. From the fact that Lowin appeared as Falstaff and Henry the Eighth, it may be assumed that he was a gentleman of portly presence. Betterton, who sustained all three characters, Hamlet, Henry the Eighth, and Falstaff, was, we know on the authority of Cibber and Anthony Aston, of middle height, inclining to corpulence, his face scarred by the small-pox, his head large, his shoulders round, his figure ill-made, his limbs thick and clumsy. He could scarcely have looked the character of young Hamlet, however possessed of the qualifications of being "fat and scant of breath." Nevertheless, Steele, in *The Tatler*, says of him that, "though about seventy, he acted youth, and by the prevalent power of proper manner, gesture, and voice, appeared through the whole drama a young man of great expectation, vivacity, and enterprise."

Mr. Payne Collier maintains that Shakespeare, in his description of his hero, was expressly considering the physical peculiarities of Richard Burbadge, and in such wise suiting the part to the player. Our information touching the personal appearance of Burbadge is derived from a *Funeral Elegy* on the death of the famous actor, discovered in manuscript in Mr. Heber's collection, and first printed by the Shakespeare Society in 1846. There seems no reason to question the authenticity of this production, albeit a suspicion of fraud hangs like a cloud over certain of the society's publications. The elegy makes mention of many of the parts played by the actor, and refers to his lowness of stature:

What a wide world was in that little space,
Thyself a world—the Globe, thy fittest place!
Thy stature small, but every thought and mood
Might throughly from thy face be understood;
And his whole action he could change with ease,
From ancient Lear to youthful Pericles.

His gifts as an actor are then observed upon; and he is addressed as Roscius, a title bestowed in a later age upon both Betterton and David Garrick:

England's great Roscius! For what Roscius
Was unto Rome, that Burbadge was to us!
How did his speech become him, and his pace
Suit with his speech, and every action grace
Them both alike, whilst not a word did fall
Without just weight to ballast it withal.
Hadst thou but spoke to Death, and used the power
Of thy enchanting tongue, at that first hour
Of his assault he had let fall his dart,
And quite been charmed with thy all-charming art;
This Death well knew, and to prevent this wrong,
He first made seizure on thy wondrous tongue;
Then on the rest; 'twas easy; by degrees
The slender ivy twines his hugest trees.

It has been inferred from this allusion to the manner of his death, that Burbadge was mortally stricken with paralysis, which in the first instance affected his speech. The verses possess little poetic merit; but they are interesting, because of the information they supply. Burbadge's appearance in Hamlet is thus recorded:

No more young Hamlet, though but scant of breath,
Shall cry "Revenge" for his dear father's death.

A quotation may be merely intended, but it seems likely that the writer had in mind the circumstance of Burbadge being himself fat and scant of breath—

Poor Romeo never more shall tears beget
For Juliet's love, and cruel Capulet:
Harry shall not be seen as king or prince,
They died with thee, dear Dick,
Not to revive again.
And Crookback, as befits, shall cease to live.
Tyrant Macbeth, with unwashed, bloody hand,
We vainly now may hope to understand.

There is also mention of

The red-haired Jew
Who sought the bankrupt merchant's pound of flesh.

The Elizabethan method of "making up" for the part of Shylock is thus revealed. Othello is referred to as the actor's "chiefest part;" and other characters in plays by the contemporaries of Shakespeare are enumerated—Edward the Second in Marlowe's tragedy of that name; Antonio in Marston's *Antonio and Mellida*; Vendice in Cyril Tourneur, *Revenger's Tragedy*; Brachiano in Webster's *White Devil*; Frankford in Heywood's *Woman Killed with Kindness*; Philaster in Beaumont and Fletcher's tragedy; Jeronimo in Kyd's tragedy of that name, and Malevole in Marston's *Malcontent*. Jeronimo is generally considered to be the first part of Kyd's Spanish Tragedy, and is described by Mr. Collier as "the first play upon record that bears evidence of having been written for a particular performer, a man of unusually small stature, and in many places this circumstance is brought forward." In one scene Jeronimo exclaims:

I'll not be long away;
As short my body, long shall be my stay.

and afterwards—

My mind's a giant, though my bulk be small.

The first representation of Jeronimo is supposed to have occurred about 1587, when Burbadge could have been no more than twenty. Perhaps he was then a short, young man. At thirty-five, he may have been short, and stout, too.

It may be noted, that the line "He's fat and scant of breath," does not occur in the

early and imperfect edition of Hamlet of 1603. Was it added to suit Burbadge? And was there a further change made also to suit Mr. Burbadge, the leading tragedian of the time? In the edition of 1603, the gravedigger says of Yorick's skull:

Looke you, here's a skull hath bin here this dozen year,

Let me see, ever since our last King Hamlet
Slew Fortenbrasse in combat, young Hamlet's father,
He that's mad.

But in all subsequent editions, the gravedigger says: "Here's a skull now; this skull has lain in the earth three-and-twenty years." The effect of this alteration is to add considerably to Hamlet's age. "Alas, poor Yorick!" he says, "I knew him, Horatio; a fellow of infinite jest, of most excellent fancy; he hath borne me on his back a thousand times; and now how abhorred in my imagination it is, my gorge rises at it! Here hang those lips that I have kissed, I know not how oft," &c. &c. How old then was Hamlet, when Yorick died? But Hamlet's age is even more distinctly fixed by other lines which do not occur in the early edition of 1603:

HAMLET. How long hast thou been a grave-maker?

FIRST CLOWN. Of all the days i' the year, I came to't that day that our last King Hamlet o'ercame Fortinbras.

HAMLET. How long is that since?

FIRST CLOWN. Cannot you tell that? Every fool can tell that; it was the very day that young Hamlet was born; he that is mad, and sent to England.

And presently, he adds:

I have been sexton here, man and boy, thirty years.

Mr. Marshall writes: "It would appear that Shakespeare added these details, which tend to prove Hamlet to have been thirty years old, for much the same reason as he inserted the line, 'He's fat, and scant of breath,' namely, in order to render Hamlet's age and personal appearance more in accordance with those of the great actor, Burbadge, who personated him." The edition of 1603 is generally accounted a piratical copy of the first sketch of the play. It contains many errors, but it may fairly be accepted as the original text of the Hamlet of Shakespeare. The editors of the Cambridge Shakespeare write: "The edition of 1603 is obviously a very imperfect reproduction of the play, and there is every reason to believe that it was printed from a manuscript surreptitiously obtained. The manuscript may have been compiled in the first instance from shorthand notes taken during the representation, but there are many errors in the printed text, which seem like errors of a

copyist, rather than of a hearer. . . .

We believe that the defects of the manuscript from which the quarto of 1603 was printed, had been in part, at least, supplemented by a reference to the authentic copy in the library of the theatre. Very probably, the man employed for this purpose was some inferior actor, or servant, who would necessarily work in haste, and by stealth, and, in any case, would not be likely to work very conscientiously for the printer or bookseller who was paying him to deceive his masters."

The introduction in later editions of passages which practically increase the age of Hamlet, may be viewed as favourable to the theory that the character might have been sustained in the first instance by a youthful player, such as Taylor was in 1602, and afterwards allotted to the more mature Burbadge. It is to be noted, however, that there is only a year's interval between the issue of the original or imperfect text, and the publication of complete editions of the play. The Hamlet of twenty, let us say, was soon supplanted by the Hamlet of thirty. Moreover, Burbadge, his thirty-five years notwithstanding, was not thought to be too old to represent such youthful characters as Romeo, Henry the Fifth, "both king and prince," Pericles, &c. Why should he be thought too old to represent the Hamlet even of 1603? At the same time the changes made in the text in this respect are hardly to be attributed to the chance error of a copyist, working however hastily and stealthily. Even if we concede that the line, "He's fat and scant of breath," was accidentally omitted from the edition of 1603, can we also admit that the mention of the date which makes Hamlet younger by some ten years was also matter of inadvertence? The "twelve years" of 1603 must have been deliberately altered to the "three-and-twenty years" of 1604. This change can hardly have been due to the error of a copyist, or of a hearer. It is rather to be believed that the author for some reason revised and amended his first statement. And clearly we are to accept implicitly the information furnished by the gravedigger; he is dealing strictly with matter of fact. Otherwise we might be tempted to think that the absolute knave, insisting upon preciseness of speech on the part of those who addressed him, was yet himself humorously inaccurate of statement, and, even in Hamlet's own presence, blundered curiously about his age.

The alteration of Hamlet's age has certainly an injurious effect upon the significance of the tragedy. If Hamlet is to be considered as of the age of thirty in the churchyard scene, why should the fact of his youth be so much insisted upon in all the other scenes? This is not the case of a drama in which long years are supposed to elapse between the acts; the action of Hamlet can hardly be supposed to occupy more than some five or six months. In the very first scene Horatio speaks of him as "young Hamlet." The ghost calls him, "Thou noble youth." His youth is also certainly implied in the fact that his mother, Gertrude, is by no means of advanced age, but still possesses charms that have tempted Claudius to commit crimes for the sake of winning her. And there is further argument for his youth in the general acceptance of Claudius as king. All the dramatis personæ seem to have agreed that Hamlet, although his father's lawful heir, was too young to mount the throne. Even the ghost of the late king, while unsparingly accusing Claudius, does not reproach him for his usurpation; nor does the ghost seek to spur the dull revenge of young Hamlet by reminding him that he has been deprived of his crown by his uncle. Claudius is remorseful because of the murder he has committed, not because of any wrong done to young Hamlet relative to his title to the throne. Upon one occasion only, when he says, "I lack advancement," does Hamlet seem to express a desire for sovereignty. Rosencrantz reminds him that he has the voice of the king himself for his succession in Denmark. Hamlet replies: "Ah, sir, but While the grass grows—the proverb is something musty." A certain impatience for the throne is signified by the musty proverb, "While the grass grows the steed starves." When Hamlet charges Claudius with being "a cutpurse of the empire and the rule, that from a shelf the precious diadem stole and put it in his pocket," the meaning clearly is that the late king has been robbed, not his son.

Many of the dramatis personæ are the youthful contemporaries of Hamlet. Laertes is called "young Laertes;" Fortinbras is called "young Fortinbras." Horatio, Rosencrantz, and Guildenstern are Hamlet's fellow-students. Hamlet meditates returning to Wittenberg as though to complete his education; upon the sudden death of his father he had been hastily summoned from his studies at the uni-

versity. Horatio speaks of himself as a truant; Hamlet tells him that he will be taught to drink at Elsinore: Horatio is still in a state of pupilage. Hamlet reminds Rosencrantz and Guildenstern of "the consonance of our youth," and addresses them as "good lads." Laertes cautions Ophelia against the trifling of Hamlet's favour, as "a fashion and a toy in blood, a violet in the youth of primy nature." Both Claudius and the queen have a certain lecturing air when they address Hamlet on his waywardness. Gertrude prepares to give him a maternal scolding, to "tax him home" in her closet. She tells him that he has his father much offended, and that he answers with an idle tongue. She would not so have spoken to a man of thirty. Claudius's speech upon Hamlet's "obstinate condolement" is a sort of moral essay suited to very youthful capacity. Skill in fence is spoken of as "a very riband in the cap of youth."

Moreover, there is a sort of boyishness about Hamlet evidenced by the quips and cranks he permits himself; by his pranks at the expense of Polonius; by his method of receiving Rosencrantz and Guildenstern; by his envy of Laertes's fame as a fencer; and even by his hysterical jocoseness after the departure of the ghost in the first act. Mr. Marshall, setting on one side the statements of the gravedigger, thinks that Shakespeare intended Hamlet to be nearer twenty than thirty, or perhaps about twenty-five years old; certainly not older. Mr. Minto, who has written ingeniously upon the subject, conceives that Hamlet "is intended to be thought of" as a youth of seventeen, adding: "I am not so absolute as the gravedigger. I am prepared to admit eighteen; I might even, though with reluctance, give in to nineteen; but there I draw the line—and I am quite willing to maintain my original position of seventeen." Other critics and students prefer to pin their faith to the gravedigger's testimony, and maintain, in spite of every objection, that Hamlet was assuredly a man of thirty. Professor Dowden, for instance, holds it to be incredible that Shakespeare could have put his "saddest and most thoughtful soliloquies" into the mouth of a boy of seventeen. Mr. Minto replies that we are apt to underrate very considerably the precocity of boys of seventeen, and that questions concerning the mysteries of life are more common among boys under twenty than among men of thirty. It must be remembered, moreover, that young Hamlet, like the Edwin of Beattie's

Minstrel, was "no vulgar boy." He was a prince of refined and cultivated intelligence. He is exhibited under very exceptional conditions. And there is proof of his youth not only in his unrestrained sorrow for his dead father; in his passion of shame at his mother's second marriage; in his excitability, irresolution, and capriciousness; but in the fact that he breaks down under the weight of the vengeance he is charged to execute. It is too much for his strength, it is beyond his years. Indeed, he is of so weak and immature a nature that he has contemplated self-slaughter even before the dreadful circumstances attendant upon his father's death have been made known to him, and while he is unaware that in addition to mourning his lost parent he has to revenge his foul and unnatural murder. His philosophical musings may be worthy of a man, but there is nothing philosophical about his conduct. His subtle plans crumble to pieces. He obtains his vengeance at last almost accidentally—Claudius is killed in a sort of chance medley. As Mr. Minto concludes: "Whatever may be our exception to Hamlet's character, to my mind the significance of the tragedy is greatly deepened by what seems to me to have been in the dramatist's original design—the thought of bright youth, with fresh, untainted faculties, suddenly plunged in a bewildering sea of crime and intrigue, and perishing there tragically after an heroic struggle."

After all has been said, Hamlet's age must remain, as the poet has left it, an inconsistency. Students and commentators can hardly adjust what the author, whether by design or accident, has left unsettled.

STRANGE WATERS.

BY R. E. FRANCILLON,

AUTHOR OF "OLYMPIA," "PEARL AND EMERALD," &c. &c.

BOOK II.

CHAPTER IV. NO.

"You are very solemn. Do you find me very difficult to-day?"

"About as usual. This is only the tenth time I have tried to begin—that is to say, only my tenth failure. I tell you what, Mademoiselle Clari," said Walter Gordon, throwing down his brush in a temper, half genuine, half affected, "there is only one way to paint you. In the first place, there must be a great painter."

Mademoiselle Clari smiled lazily—a new

expression of a new mood. "He is great enough to content me."

"Ah, but that isn't enough; though he were Titian and Raphael rolled into one. He must fall in love with you—desperately, passionately, over head and ears."

The prima donna smiled again; but not lazily. The light, as it were, mounted up from her lips to her eyes, and then travelled from her eyes to her lips again. It was not a blush—the colour that came was not of warmth, but of light only.

"That would be good. I think I would like to be loved desperately, passionately, over the head and all over the ears."

"And then," said Walter, with enthusiasm, "this great painter, this gigantic lover, must watch you for years and years, till he had caught you in the right mood with just the right look in you—and then——"

"Paint me?"

"No—kill you."

"Kill me?"

"Yes—stab you to the heart with one blow, so quickly that you would not feel, and your face would have no time to change. Then——"

"Then?"

"He would be able to study you at his leisure, you see," said Walter, thrusting his hands deep into his trousers pockets, and looking at her as if he had said the most matter-of-course thing in the world.

Mademoiselle Clari, always slow to take in a new idea, considered gravely. Then, at last, she smiled approval.

"I would love that," she said, slowly and deliberately, as if she were dwelling lingeringly upon a pleasant flavour. "That would be a good way of loving—to be loved so that a man would kill me to keep me."

"For art's sake, of course, mademoiselle."

"No—for mine." A passing frown. "I have nothing to do with art. I—I hate the name. It is ciarlatanismo—porcheria—humbug, what you say. I would not for art have one cut my finger. But—do you know, I think you know me a little?"

"I've tried to, anyway. Ten times."

"No. Not that way. And not very much; but a little—yes," she added, reflectively. "It was plainly not one of her intense days, but she was inclined for variety of mood. Perhaps she felt herself challenged to crowd as many expressions as possible into the smallest fragment of time."

"Perhaps I know you better than you think," said Walter, betaking himself to his fallen brush again, though he had to do for himself what an emperor did for Titian.

"I think you have a great deal of passion in you; so much that it makes you seem cold."

"You think so?" She looked interested. Self was never an uninteresting topic to Mademoiselle Clari.

"I'm sure of it. And then—then you have a temper. People generally have a temper who have very sweet voices and very sweet smiles."

"Yes, I have a temper," she said, very sweetly indeed; in a very sweet voice and with a very sweet smile.

"But you have what goes with a warm temper."

"Yes? What is that? Hating?"

"No; a warm and kind heart—that is what I mean."

"I said you only knew me a little. But you do look solemn! What are your thinks now?"

"Coffee and strawberries, mademoiselle."

"Coffee and strawberries?"

"Surely. I am thinking of a lady I once knew who was angry, very angry, about a cup of coffee, and then—"

"I was angry about the coffee because it was poison—"

"But the strawberries, mademoiselle. It is on account of the strawberries that I want you to do a real kindness—"

"To you?"

"No. You are kind enough to me when you sit there in the sunshine. It is to a friend of mine."

"Certainly, to a friend of yours," said Clari, indifferently. "Who is he?"

"It is a girl," said Walter. "You can help her—and only you can. I'll tell you all about her, and—well, it is a sad story."

"That is nothing so strange," said Clari, with a sudden stiff coldness in her voice—almost of contempt; another new note, which almost startled Walter by its abruptness. "Well?"

"She is the daughter of the organist of Deepweald. She was a fellow-student of mine at Lindenheim. She had a lovely voice, and promised great things."

"A very lovely voice?" asked Clari, languidly.

"Very," said Walter, emphatically. "One of the most beautiful I ever heard."

"Was she a great friend of yours?"

"We were very great friends; but I have lost sight of her for some years—I met her again at Deepweald."

"Since you have been painting me?"

"Since I have been here. And she—"

"I know. She has the very loveliest voice, she is beautiful, she is charming, she is divine. I know—I know."

Walter had been painting, inattentively, while he was speaking. He stopped short, however, and looked at Clari. What in the world had he said to offend the prima donna? Offended she was, that was certain. She was not frowning, as was usual with her when out of temper; but there was a kind of cloud over her face. Surely she was too indisputably great in her calling, to be jealous because she heard a voice praised that was not her own? And yet the tone of her words certainly suggested jealousy.

"I never said so, mademoiselle."

"If she is so divine," said Clari, "she will help herself, monsieur. What should I do? I have enough to care for myself, I, per Bacco! This is the world, monsieur. If she was only like me, she would want help, but divine creatures do not want for help while there are men."

"Mademoiselle! She is no more to be compared to you than a bud to a blossom—"

"It is the blossoms that fade, monsieur."

"I was saying," said Walter, "that she is the daughter of the organist at Deepweald. And he is grown so deaf that he cannot follow his profession, he will have to lose his place, and that means ruin. They have no means of living."

"You have learned a great deal in Deepweald."

"The girl ought to make a name—not like yours, of course, but enough to live by."

"Let her sing, then."

"Her father is an eccentric man—half mad, I should say. He refuses her every chance—he will let her do nothing. There is nobody to help her—literally, nobody. With a fortune in her voice she is like to starve."

"They say in my country, Heaven helps those who help themselves. One need not have the voice if one has the face, monsieur."

"But Heaven needs agents, mademoiselle. I thought perhaps when you heard the story you might do something. You might hear her—and a word from you—"

"What could I do? You can do more than I—if you have such interest in this girl. She is nothing to me. And if she were—"

Clari was indeed more than displeased. It was almost as if the whole sweetness had gone out of her when the talk of the young man, hitherto devoted to her own glory, even to the point of declaring Love to be the only painter fit to hold a brush

in her honour, had barrenly turned off into the likeness of a trap to catch her sympathy for a—friend. Had he not been so full of his duty to Celia, and of his eagerness to invest the influence of a woman like Clari in her behalf, he might have remembered that his intercourse with the prima donna had been sliding, all these weeks past, with sure slowness, from comradeship to intimacy, from intimacy to confidence, till sentiment had grown warm and promised to grow warmer. And in such cases—he might surely have known—that a woman like Clari, whose summer already has lost its June, is not willing to be asked for sympathy with May.

"And if she were," she went on, after a pause, with a touch of bitter sharpness added to the coldness of her tone, "I would not help her. I would not help any girl I cared for to be like me. Can she sew?"

"She could never be like you."

"No—per Bacco! That is not likely. I am Clari."

Surely such jealousy was something abnormal. And yet what else could her feeling be? Walter felt himself ready to renounce his belief in his comprehension of womankind, once for all.

"I shall send her some pounds, and welcome; they shall buy her a sewing-machine. But I will not hear her—no. I have heard voices enough: I want no more. Tell her to sew; tell her from me, Clari, when you see her to-morrow. Is she so difficult to paint as I? Must you kill her to know her, like me? Very well. You shall kill her: it will be better for her. I will make no artists—no: per Bacco!"

"How have I made you angry?"

"I am not angry. I enrage," said Clari, as if leaping at an excuse for relieving herself by speaking hotly. "It is this art that enrages me."

"I wish I knew——"

"Oh, you shall know. I have been a girl too—and I know. There was one came to me and talked of art—like you to her. I was not happy—and you talk of being poor! I was poor—poor as she does not know. Art! Ah, that was a divine dream—all things: and love besides. I sold myself for it all—I have told you before. He was a demon. He made me sing, and sing, and sing; have I not told you all? I remember it—like yesterday! It was the Carnival. You have been in Rome—you have seen it all. I was a child; I knew nothing. I had lived in a prison; such a prison! And then, all at once, all in one moment, I found myself

alive. The moccili went out; it seemed as if I died again. Then he came, and told me I should live for ever if I followed him; that he would give me all I had seen, and make me a queen. He bound me to him, that I might not escape from him. He kept me his slave; I must serve, he said, that I might rule. I made myself a slave, for I knew I was to be a queen, and live, and have all the world. At last, he said, I have made you; you can sing. Ah, I knew that, as well as he! And then—then I learned what I had been bought for—art, gran Dio! Art—to wait till I could give him glory; to serve him like a slave till my youth was gone, and my voice was worn; to see other women becoming queens, and living my life—mine! That was not what I followed him for, gran Dio! Yes, I loved him. He made me. But he did not keep his bargain; he cheated me, with lies. What would you have done?"

It would be idle to say that Walter Gordon fairly comprehended one word of this outburst, which seemed to assume itself to be an intelligible story, though every detail was omitted, and though she leaped from point to point without a pause for questioning. Only one thing was clear to him thus far—the great prima donna had been gloriously trained, and was splendidly ungrateful. Though for what reason he could not conceive; unless it was that her first music-master and impresario had tried to cheat her—not so extraordinary an experience as to call forth such life-long indignation.

"I should have done like you," he said; "done myself and my master justice."

"Ecco!" she said triumphantly. "That I have done! I told him to his face—you have made me, and I am made. I would not wait—I had not changed the Ghetto for art—I sang. Ah, I loved to sing—then. He could not hinder me. We were in Florence then. I sang the first time there. Gran cielo, the furore that first time! The people went mad, monsieur! It was Lucia, It was triumph for me. Ah, he had taught me well—and I was to waste all that, all my soul and my glory for art—bah! It is a thing—I know not; I knew what I knew."

"You have not told me who he was—but surely he must have been proud of you."

"He was a demon. What he wanted—how could I tell? I left the theatre; I went home. When I went to the theatre, he had not said one word. He knew I was going to sing; he only said, 'Go, then.' Ah, do you know what a devil can do, when he is a man!"

Walter felt himself on the very brink of some strange discovery, though even then he was unable to comprehend the preface. Still, the fierce volubility of the prima donna, once set fully free, carried him away; her incoherent story infected him with something of its passion. He waited silently, that he might not by a gesture even divert its flow. He at least knew her well enough to know that the merest straw might turn the current in mid-course.

"He can rob a mother of her life—her child. That is what he can do. That is his revenge. That is art. And I hate art—that is why. Sing for art—*gran Dio*—I! I sing for revenge. I sing for glory. I sing for diamonds and flowers. That is my revenge—if he is anywhere in the world. Ah, art will have not much chance while I am alive. I sing because I hate art, and because I hate him. Paint me now—quick! Have you your dagger? Now, while the hate is out on me. You know me now—*eccomi quà!*"

Incoherent, incomprehensible, her passion was real. There was no doubt but that there stood before him the true Clari, beautiful, natural, and fascinating for—men who can love tiger-women. Walter Gordon would have given a year of his life to be able to paint her just as she was then. Any shadow of anything beyond sentiment for her that had been growing up in him died away into pure artistic admiration, intensified by the effect of her dramatic power. For even in the very truth of her passion was the tragic force of the born actress, which not even an outburst of nature could distort or lessen. It was art and nature in one. But she had not told her story. Was it literal truth, or only a bold metaphor made at random that some real man, in revenge for her having escaped from his managerial tyranny, had robbed her of a real child? That would indeed be satanic, because inhumanly incomprehensible.

And, whatever it all means, what could have produced this sudden outburst of confidence? Surely not his mere proposal that she should try the voice of a poor girl, with a view to putting her in the way of picking up a few professional windfalls. Could it really be that she, the great artist, really hated the very name of her art so intensely as to look with horror on

the idea of a fellow-woman's treading the same road? And then he thought of The Five Adzes, and could not convince himself that Clari's devotion to her calling was the result of such unadulterated hatred as she professed it to be. Her love of admiration was at least as genuine as the passion that had just been displayed before him. He could only wonder and reflect, as many a better and wiser man has done before him, what riddles some women are. Even Celia was beyond him, with the devotion to her capricious tyrant which seemed more outrageously complete than Clari's rebellion had been. If he could only persuade Celia to follow that far in the footsteps of the prima donna!

"Let us go," said Clari, "and look at the cucumbers."

That was the first thing she had said to-day that did not surprise him. He was prepared now for any variation of mood; had she really presented to him a dagger and her heart he would not have been surprised. But he noticed that she spoke sadly.

"And when," she asked, as they entered the garden, "are you going to Deepweald?" This more gently.

"I don't know. It all depends. Do you mean you are thinking of—"

"Hearing that girl? No. I've said so. But you can give her a note for me. That may help her—and her deaf father. Is she very beautiful?"

Walter was growing a little wiser, if only for friendship's sake; or, at least, a little more prudent. "She is pretty enough," he said, thinking of the gentle dark eyes, aus Lindenheim, that had never looked but kindly and sweetly, for all that they were so like Clari's—sometimes.

They had not quite reached the cucumber-frames, when Walter was aware of a tall clerical figure approaching them from the direction of the park. It raised its hat as it approached, and,

"May I speak to you for five minutes?" said the Reverend Reginald Gaveston to Mademoiselle Clari, before he nodded to Walter Gordon. "I was told I should most likely find you here."

Walter Gordon wondered, as well he might, what business the curate of St. Anselm's could possibly have with Mademoiselle Clari—of all men and of all women in the world.